

Week Ending Friday, January 21, 2000

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on
Action on Title III of the Cuban
Liberty and Democratic Solidarity
(LIBERTAD) Act of 1996**

January 14, 2000

Dear _____:

Pursuant to section 306(c)(2) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-114), (the "Act"), I hereby determine and report to the Congress that suspension for 6 months beyond February 1, 2000, of the right to bring an action under title III of the Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 15.

The President's Radio Address

January 15, 2000

Good morning. On Monday America will celebrate, through reflection and service, the birth of the 20th century's great champion for justice and civil rights, Dr. Martin Luther King. Today I want to talk with you about new steps we're taking to fulfill Dr. King's dream and redeem America's promise.

Of course, we've come a long way. I'm joined today by a woman named Charlotte Filmore. Mrs. Filmore is 100 years old.

Through the years, she's seen her share of discrimination. A good while ago, she worked at the White House and back then, even here, she had to use a side door. Well, today Charlotte Filmore came to the White House through the front door, and all the way to the Oval Office. But there is still more to do. So, this morning I want to tell you about what we're doing to open more doors of opportunity for all Americans.

In his last speech, Dr. King reminded us that the work of dignity and justice is as old as America itself. He said it's about going back to those great wells of democracy dug deep by our Founding Fathers and the Constitution. To draw from that well, Dr. King challenged us to dig deep within our own hearts to face our flaws, renew our values, live up to our Nation's creed.

We are doing better. We have the strongest economy in a generation, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, and thankfully, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded, the lowest African-American poverty rate ever recorded, and the lowest Hispanic poverty rate in 25 years. We are coming together as a community. Our social fabric is on the mend.

But still there are people and places throughout America that have been left behind by this economic recovery. Minority unemployment and poverty still is about twice the national average. Still there are too many barriers on the road to opportunity, too many examples of Americans facing discrimination in daily life.

No American in the 21st century should have to face such discrimination when it comes to finding a home, getting a job, going to school, securing a loan. That's why I'm very proud that my budget for the coming year will include the largest ever investment to enforce our civil rights laws, to help make sure that protections in law are protections in fact. I'm proposing a 20 percent increase for the Civil Rights Division of the Justice